

Activities to Empower Small Businesses to Secure and Enforce Their IPR:

The Department of Commerce has undertaken numerous activities to assist small-and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in protecting intellectual property rights (IPR), both in the United States and abroad.

www.StopFakes.gov and STOP Hotline: The Department of Commerce launched a website to provide updates and links to IPR programs. The site allows businesses to file complaints about IPR-related trade problems, which are answered within ten days by a trade specialist from the Office of Intellectual Property Rights. The Department of Commerce also established the 1-866-999-HALT hotline answered by U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) IPR experts, who work with the Office of Intellectual Property Rights to help businesses secure and enforce their IPR through international treaties.

Country IPR Toolkits: The Department of Commerce developed country toolkits – posted on embassy websites and on www.StopFakes.gov – that contain detailed information on protecting IPR in Brazil, Brunei, China, Egypt, European Union, India, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Russia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Department of Commerce is working to expand the program to include toolkits for other trading partners.

Securing the Supply Chain: In 2009, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce released the Intellectual Property Protection and Enforcement Manual, an evolution from the Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy's (CACP) 2006 No Trade in Fakes Supply Chain Tool Kit. The manual offers practical advice on how brand owners can protect their intellectual property through careful and proactive brand management. This document is posted online at www.thecacp.com. The Department of Commerce's Office of Intellectual Property Rights is working with the CACP to encourage our trading partners to develop similar guidelines for foreign markets.

Protecting IPR at Trade Fairs: The Department of Commerce developed a program to promote IPR protection at domestic and international trade fairs. The Department of Commerce is educating trade fair attendees, exhibitors, and organizers about the value of IPR, raise awareness of IPR issues at trade fairs, and promote IPR protection at trade fairs and pavilions that the Department of Commerce operates, certifies, or supports.

International IPR Advisory Program: The Department of Commerce established a program with the American Bar Association through which American small-and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) can request a free, one-hour consultation with a volunteer attorney knowledgeable in both industry IPR issues and a particular country to learn how to protect and enforce their IPR, such as trademarks, patents, or copyrights, in that country. Expertise is now available for Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia, and Thailand.

Online IPR Training Module: The Department of Commerce's Office of Intellectual Property Rights worked with the PTO, the Small Business Administration, and the Foreign Commercial Service to develop an online training program for SMEs to learn how to evaluate, protect, and enforce their IPR. The English-language program is available free online at www.stopfakes.gov and will soon be available in both French and Spanish.

Outreach and Seminars: The Department of Commerce's Office of Intellectual Property Rights regularly conducts outreach and training events about how companies can protect and enforce intellectual property rights in the U.S. and overseas. Outreach events are conducted in-person and via webinar.

Working With Our Trade Partners: The Department of Commerce is sharing SME resources and introducing IPR initiatives with our partners in multilateral organizations, such as the G-8, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (the OECD) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. We have also developed partnerships with the European Union, France, and Japan to share resources on IPR enforcement cooperation and combating global IPR theft. Finally, we are addressing IPR concerns through the trilateral U.S., Canada, and Mexico North America IPR Working Group.

Future Projects: The Department of Commerce's Office of Intellectual Property Rights looks forward to establishing additional programs to help small-and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) protect and enforce their intellectual property rights.